

From: hmkachline
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 11/21/01 2:38pm
Subject: Microsoft settlement comments

While I realize that since September 11th you have a great deal more to do than to fight illegal business practices, I hope that you will consider the following in your settlement agreement with Microsoft:

-Have a few people who know something about computers and CS to watch the company. It is my opinion that if they built cars, the result would be closer to a Yugo than a Lincoln.

-Microsoft, like all companies, needs to make a profit. This cannot come from selling blue sky. If you look at their TV advertising for XP, blue sky appears to be exactly what they're pushing. I cannot say that anyone wants to go to a mall where every store is run by the same company. In my opinion, that is exactly what Microsoft has attempted to do in the software industry. With their recent incursions into the PC market and the game and set-top box market, it is apparent that Microsoft desires to control more than software.

-Read the licensing restrictions. If Microsoft made refrigerators with ligatures like this, would you buy one?

-I read that part of the agreement, according to Reuters at <http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/technology/tech-tech-microsoft.html> is that Microsoft is "to provide free software and computers to more than

14,000 of the poorest U.S. schools over five years," While this may seem at face value to be the equivalent of a community service sentence, in my opinion, the sentence is on the schools who get the "free" software and computers, because

a- the settlement appears to rule out the choice of non-Windows based systems, such as Apple and UNIX.

b- Who is going to pay for support and upkeep? The "poor school districts? With what source of income? If the poor schools have to hire IT people to fix what breaks - and something will break - the computer will hardly be "free". On a broken computer, free software is useless. Unless provision is made for warranty service for a reasonable period of time, the students and the poor school districts will suffer, even though Microsoft will have followed DOJ stipulations.

Thank you for providing an address for comments.

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"When you come to a fork in the road, take it." - Yogi Berra